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ABSTRACT

This proposal suggests staff programs for implementing better cultural and racial relations in an integrated school system in Burke County, North Carolina. Specifically, new instructional challenges for interracial classrooms, such as inclusion of black history and culture, are studied. Also, ways to involve staff in new understanding and skills are considered. Methods actually used include an orientation workshop for teachers, group meetings, in-service training programs, and visitations. Some of the frustration and anxieties of staff were relieved after group meetings and workshops on black history were conducted. Throughout, there were indications of attempts to enrich the program with multi-ethnic materials. The awareness of the need to improve the instructional program and the willingness on the part of the administration, teachers, and students to accept the challenge and responsibility, were considered achievements. (Author/JW)

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A PROPOSAL FOR A PROGRAM OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT DESIGNED TO IMPLEMENT POSITIVE MULTI-CULTURAL PROGRAM OFFERINGS IN AN INTEGRATED SCHOOL SYSTEM WITH EMPHASIS ON A NEW SOCIAL STUDIES CONCEPT

(Final Report)

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ABSTRACT

TITLE: A Proposal for a Program of Staff Development Designed to Implement Positive Multi-Cultural Program Offerings in an Integrated School System with Emphasis on a New Social Studies Concept

PURPOSE: It is the desire of this administration to expose both teachers and pupils to an instructional program that embraces within the units the heritage and culture of ethnic groups - mainly that of the Negro with whom this system is concerned.

The administration feels it is important to expose all children, whether in a desegregated or segregated school, to a program that will broaden their outlook and experiences about the contribution of minority groups, as well as identify themselves and their origin with the cultural heritage of this nation.

In order to assure the best education for the children of the Burke County Schools, due consideration must be given to needs that were identified at the termination of Phase II of the proposed program.

1. Providing an educational program that will enable each child to develop a self-image which is satisfying to himself and acceptable to his

peers and to society. (A child may learn to establish individual goals.)

2. Training teachers to implement a program in the classroom where each child is recognized and respected - that he might become a productive member of the society in which he lives.

3. Providing activities and means by which minority groups participate and can make worthwhile contributions to the group.

4. Planning for visitation for administrators and teacher groups for further exposure to programs within and without the county.

Among the specific objectives toward which all activities are concentrated are these:

1. To study new instructional challenges that confront us in multi-cultural and heterogeneous classrooms, with concentration on modifying changes and development of units of work which emphasize the contributions of the Negro in world and national history and culture.

2. To involve staff coming to the system for the first time to apply new skills, knowledge, methods, and understandings toward implementing a program in the classroom which will more effectively educate all pupils, regardless of

race, color, or national origin.

3. To study problems of curriculum construction, toward improving teaching methods, and classroom procedures so that our instructional program becomes more relevant to pupil needs.

4. To devise and provide methods for involvement of minority groups in the co-activities program of the school.

5. To exchange ideas, visits, and personnel with other units having similar problems and programs in order to observe basic changes that might produce a more positive attitude toward integrated groups.

PROCEDURES: The major thrust was directed toward helping teachers become aware of the importance of contributions made by all citizens of a multi-racial society in building America, and their effect on mutual respect and human dignity.

Considerable effort has been directed toward achieving the specific objectives as set forth in this proposal through:

1. Providing Instructional Materials

With library coordinator and school librarians, a survey was made of all libraries to ascertain what materials were available to be used in the

program. The lack of adequate materials delayed the actual beginning of the program. However, with the aid of the librarians, materials were purchased.

2. Orientation Workshop

A workshop was held for teachers new to the Burke County Schools to acquaint them with school policies and the Title IV Program - Phases I, II, and III.

3. Group Meetings

Small group meetings were held during the year with social studies teachers K-12. These meetings were conducted by consultants with the major thrust toward the teaching of multi-ethnic materials, with emphasis on Negro history and culture.

4. In-Service Training Programs

In-Service Training Programs were held during the year with professional consultants, directed toward broadening the knowledge of participants as to the role of the Negro in the development of America, and enriching the units of study of multi-ethnic materials with emphasis on Language Arts.

5. Visitations

Visits were made to all schools in the system.

(a) To work with guidance counselors.

(b) To confer with principals in relation to ways of implementing multi-cultural program offerings into present social studies program, and select key staff members to aid in initiating the program in each school.

(c) Conferences were held with Superintendent Johnson and central staff.

(d) Visits were made to libraries to make follow-up studies on materials placed in libraries.

(e) Trips were made to professional meetings and related activities.

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS: For three years the Burke County School System has worked at the task of completely integrating its school system. After two years it became apparent that to achieve true integration the instructional program must be geared to meet the needs of all its students, and must provide for greater personal and group autonomy. We found stereotype thinking still existed among both black and white students. Even teachers were found lacking the knowledge, and were inadequately prepared to teach effectively what is considered sensitive subject matter in bi-racial groups - mainly Negro history and culture.

Some of the frustration and anxieties were relieved

after the group meetings and the in-service workshops on Negro history were conducted. Expertise in the field of Negro history were brought in as consultants to the meetings. Several such meetings were held with members of the Social Studies Division of the State Department of Public Instruction, Raleigh, North Carolina.

Throughout the year there were indications of attempts to enrich the program with multi-ethnic materials. In the lower grades bulletin boards and classroom bookshelves began to display more materials on the Negro. Teachers began to bring into focus the Negro as a natural participant in the development of America - using as a springboard the contributions of Negroes - past and present - who have been recognized and accepted for their contributions.

A great deal of praise should be given to the librarians for the tremendous job of stimulating the circulation of materials to students, and the interlacing of materials on the role of the Negro into the regular library display, and other activities.

We feel that probably the awareness of the need to improve the instructional program and the willingness on the part of the administration, teachers, and students to accept the challenge and responsibility of trying to provide an instructional program geared

to the needs of all students is our greatest achievement.

Small groups of teachers met during the year to prepare tentative guidelines, with recommendations for improving the instructional program in Social Studies. These guidelines, exploring the utilization of new materials and instructional innovations in Social Studies and Language Arts, is only one step toward trying to provide a better instructional program for the children of Burke County Schools, but cannot be evaluated until they have been explored and implemented by the classroom teachers.

Much of the success of the work done these three years will be contingent upon what programs are adopted by the consolidated system. (The merger of the Burke County Schools, the Morganton City Schools, and the Glen Alpine City Schools becomes effective July 1, 1969, as the Burke County Public Schools. Only the Burke County School System has participated in the Title IV Program.)

This necessitated some major changes in programs that were being developed.

BURKE COUNTY SCHOOLS

Burke County Schools System

July 1, 1969 terminates the Burke County Schools System, the largest of three in Burke County. Its merger with the Morganton City Schools and the Glen Alpine City Schools will create the Burke County Public Schools.

The consolidated system with approximately 521 teachers of which six (6%) percent is Negro; and 13,000 students, approximately six (6%) percent Negro, will begin its operation with the 1969-70 school year. The schools are desegregated and presently operating under compliance with Form 441 - except for six (6) schools of the Burke County System which were not affected by desegregation.

Located in the Western Piedmont section of North Carolina, Burke County which is mainly rural, has a population of 52,701 (1960 Census). Dispersed throughout the county and towns are small communities of Negroes who comprise 7.5% of the population. The populace is employed principally in furniture and textile industries where for many years Negroes have been employed only in menial jobs. In more recent years a very small number have been placed in responsible positions which heretofore had been denied to Negroes. There are no professional Negroes other than ministers, teachers, nurses, and social workers.

In 1966 the Burke County Schools submitted a proposal to the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education, Division of Equal Educational Opportunities, Title IV of Civil Rights Act of 1964, to conduct a long range training

program for teachers in Desegregation Institutes. These institutes were primarily concerned with preparing teachers and administrators to successfully meet the change from a segregated school system to an integrated one. These programs brought to the county expertise to work with administrators and teachers.

The program also made possible the bringing together of staff, principals, and teachers, with the aid of specialized consultants, to cooperatively examine the needs of a desegregated school system. Teachers became sensitive to the needs of the minority groups who are not provided for in the framework of the curriculum, or who had not had an opportunity to take pride in themselves, their image, or their self esteem.

Program and Activities

PROGRAM:

Since August, 1966, the Burke County School System has worked on a program, made possible by a grant from the United States Office of Education - Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, designed to smooth the transition from a segregated system to one of complete integration.

During the three years of Phase I, II, and III of the Title IV Program, the principal thrust has been toward a training program to help teachers to provide an instructional program that will assure each child in the system an opportunity to become a productive citizen, and make teachers aware of the importance of integrating the contributions of minority groups into the curriculum.

While some consideration had heretofore been given to other minority groups, very little concern had been shown toward the enormous contributions made by the Negro to the historical and cultural heritage of the United States. For this reason our main focus has been directed toward the Negro - the minority group in the community.

In spite of the tremendous gains (Phase I and II) toward the goal of true integration, there were major areas of concern still to be adequately dealt with in order to create a new social climate within a bi-racial classroom. Considerable study was given to the improvement of educational practices and needs; among which were:

1. An educational program that will enable each child to develop a self-image which is satisfying to himself and acceptable to his peers and to society.

2. Training teachers to implement a program in the classroom where each child is recognized and respected.

3. Providing activities and means by which minority groups can participate and can make worthwhile contributions to the group.

4. Planning for visitation for administrators and teacher groups for further exposure to programs within and without the county.

Inasmuch as the importance of the individual is an integral part of the total instructional program, concentrated efforts were directed toward these specific objectives:

1. To study new instructional challenges that confront us in

multi-cultural and heterogeneous classrooms, with concentration on modifying changes and development of units of work which emphasize the contributions of the Negro in world and national history and culture.

2. To involve staff coming to the system for the first time to apply new skills, knowledge, methods, and understandings toward implementing a program in the classroom which will more effectively educate all pupils, regardless of race, color, or national origin.

3. To study problems of curriculum construction, toward improving teaching methods, and classroom procedures so that our instructional program becomes more relevant to pupil needs.

4. To devise and provide methods for involvement of minority groups in the co-activities program of the school.

5. To exchange ideas, visits, and personnel with other units having similar problems and programs in order to observe basic changes that might produce a more positive attitude toward integrated groups.

ACTIVITIES:

Several activities were employed to achieve the objective as set forth in the proposal.

1. Materials

Visits were made to libraries to ascertain what multi-ethnic materials were available for teachers and pupils on Negro history and culture; very few were found. Working with the

library coordinator and librarians, materials on the Negro's role in American History were evaluated and purchased.

2. In-Service Programs

Several workshops were held during the year for Social Studies teachers K-12.

One such workshop was held on December 5, 1968, with 24 teachers attending. Miss Mary Van Wilkins, Television Studio Teacher of United States History, Raleigh, North Carolina, and Mr. Fred Cranford, Burke County Schools, were the consultants. Miss Wilkins spoke on ways and means of integrating Negro History into the study of American History. Mr. Cranford spoke on weaving Negro History into the present units of study. He gave examples of how this could be done with the present units now being studied. This meeting brought teachers together for the first time to discuss the teaching of Negro History.

Dr. George P. Antone, Instructor of American History, Appalachian State University, Boone, North Carolina, was consultant for a meeting on January 28, 1969, for 28 Social Studies teachers K-12. He spoke on The Negroes' Role in American History.

A three-day in-service workshop on Negro History was held on March 8, 9, 15, 1969, at Western Piedmont Community College. These sessions were attended by 132 teachers. Newspaper articles created community interest and awareness, and several interested visitors from other institutes attended these

meetings.

Speakers were as follows: Mr. Robert J. Cummings, History Department, Winston-Salem University, Winston-Salem, North Carolina; Dr. George B. Thomas, Hood Seminary, Livingstone College, Salisbury, North Carolina; Dr. George P. Antone, History Department, Appalachian State University, Boone, North Carolina; and Mr. Floyd Gravitt, Principal, Reid School, Arlington, Virginia. The presentations were excellent and drew high praise from teacher participants. They were basically historical facts with implications on our present society. Mr. Cummings' presentation, the first in the series, on African Culture and History very well set the pace for the other meetings.

Dr. Antone participated in each of the three sessions, choosing three periods of which to lecture, viz: Slavery As An Institution; The Negro During The Civil War and Reconstruction; and A Century of Negro Progress.

These presentations were especially informative, since teachers felt these were some of the more difficult periods to introduce to bi-racial groups.

Dr. Thomas discussed Afro-American Culture and Heritage. This presentation following Mr. Cummings' lecture on African History provided for greater understanding of the Afro-American. Teachers were given information that would help students understand the Afro-American background.

Mr. Gravitt spoke on Negro History In The Curriculum. He was able to relate to the group his experiences in the integration of Negro History in the Arlington Public Schools. Open discussions followed each lecture.

Social Studies teachers (1-12) met on May 20, 1969, with Miss June Gilliard, Social Studies Division, Department of Public Instruction, Raleigh, North Carolina. She discussed ways of teaching the role of minorities in the American Heritage. She also suggested procedures and format for the presentation of materials to be taught separately or for enrichment in the curriculum.

Twenty-two teachers from the three merged systems spent two weeks, June 9-20, 1969, working on a program in Language Arts - the use of multi-ethnic materials - for the new consolidated school system. This terminated a program that was initiated in the fall by the Burke County School System. Materials that had been compiled by teachers under the direction of Mr. Clyde Shuping, Associate Superintendent of Instruction, and the Supervisors of Burke County were evaluated and used to help develop some guidelines for the teaching of Language Arts. This in-service workshop brought, for the first time, the working together of the consolidated personnel.

Conclusion and Evaluation

The highlights of the program has been the in-service workshops for teachers during the three phases which substantially equipped teachers to work effectively with problems incident to desegre-

gation. It helped them to become aware of the magnitude of the task of providing an educational program that would develop the child to build for himself a worthwhile life.

The major activity in the last phase of the program has been the broadening of the knowledge of the classroom teacher on the history of the Negro. The omission of the textbook and instructional materials to make meaningful the Negro experiences afforded little opportunity to prepare teachers with methodology on skills to deal with the interlacing of Negro History into the curriculum.

In view of these facts, a program to make available basic materials and books on Negro History was initiated. Materials that reflected aspects of American life, other than that which was already a part of the instructional program, were purchased.

Meetings were held with central staff members, principals, and teachers in relation to ways of implementing multi-cultural program offerings into the present Social Studies program, and selection of key-teachers to aid in initiating the program in each school.

Libraries were checked to ascertain what books and materials could be used by teachers and students to strengthen their background on the history of the Negro. Also, materials that could be adapted to their needs.

Working with the coordinator of libraries of the Burke County School System, materials on the Negroes' role in American History were evaluated and purchased.

Although there had been much concern on the subject during Phases I & II, teachers were hesitant, sensitive, and apparently felt insecure. Social Studies teachers met, with Miss Mary Van Wilkins and Mr. Fred Cranford as consultants, to discuss the teaching of Negro History. At this time a basic set of books was given to each teacher.

A second meeting with Dr. Antone as consultant brought about these comments:

> "The meetings were interesting. I feel more stirred to do more reading on my own to help broaden my background. We are concerned with the multi-culture which cannot be separated. It must be taught in all grades as a subject - history, not Negro history or white history. We would profit by (1) extension courses, (2) in-service training, and (3) lectures."
>
> "Please have some workshops to teach us some Negro History. I feel like I don't know enough to teach Negro History."
>
> "The materials made available from the meetings were based on <u>all</u> Negro History. What is the difference in <u>all</u> white and <u>all</u> Negro? Why not materials which correlate the two? If we want Negro Histroy taught effectively, we must forget the terms white and Negro."
>
> "If we teach history, both sides will come out naturally. We know now what we don't know."

As an outgrowth of comments by teachers, a three-day workshop on

the study of Negro History was planned. I feel the attitude of the participants can be summed up in these expressions.

"These workshops on Negro History have been very interesting and worthwhile. The speakers were well prepared, and presented the facts in a clear concise manner. The interest shown by teachers returning for each session is a tribute to the success of the in-service workshop."

"It has been an enlightening experience to be exposed to the intellectual and highly qualified black speakers we have had. The diversity of the personalities has also added interest. The audio-visual materials should also be rated as excellent, enlightening, interesting, and great."

Many innovations attempted by the teachers of the Burke County Schools have convinced us that the in-service programs had a very positive impact on the participants. Some consideration was given to areas of Negro History that may not have been accepted.

In most instances, interest among students was high. Checking on library circulations, books recently placed on the shelves were found to be very good; and students were requesting multi-ethnic materials for personal information and assignments. The great request for books like Black Like Me; I Am The Darker Brother; and Native Son seemed to have had more effect on the thinking of the youth than the actual study of Negro History in the classrooms, at this time. This thinking is substantiated by these typical student statements: "Could this really be true?;" "I never knew that anything like this could really exist.;" "I

have some new thinking about this thing."

Social Studies teachers who have been engaged in attempts to bring the history of the Negro into focus are well pleased with the acceptance by students.

A limited number of Social Studies teachers and Language Arts teachers met to study proposed ways that Negro History and Culture might be brought into the Social Studies program, and to prepare guidelines.

Although there are many problems yet to be solved, if we are to achieve our goal of true integration, the willingness of administration, teachers, and students to accept the challenge and responsibility of working together to improve the instructional program and needs is our pre-eminent achievement.